

Copyright, 1912, by American-Examiner. Great Britain Rights Reserved.

# "THE LAUGH THAT KILLED LANTHELME"

Mlle. Renouardt,  
whose joyous  
laugh some blame  
for beautiful Lan-  
telme's death.

Science  
Explains How the  
Greatest Charm of a  
Gay Little Rival Could Cause  
the Death of the Famous French  
Beauty---JUST AS PARIS SAID IT DID

Paris, February 6.  
ONE by one the curious details leading up to the tragic death of the Parisian beauty, Mlle. Lantelme, are coming out. The latest and strangest centres about Mlle. Renouardt, Mlle. Lantelme's rival for popular favor during the last year of her life.

"It was the laugh of Renouardt, the most joyous, musical laugh in the world, that drove Ginette to death!" say her friends.

Look at the photograph of Lantelme on this page. It is the very last she ever had taken. It is shown here for the first time, and was not posed for the camera. The photographer thought it was, but in reality he caught the Paris stage's idol while she was listening to the laugh of Renouardt, and while she had forgotten that the camera was pointed at her. This is the story:

Mlle. Lantelme married one of the richest men in France, M. Edwards, proprietor of Le Matin, the great Paris newspaper. He gave her everything she wanted—except absolute freedom. Lantelme had always a morbid strain. There is hardly a photograph of her that shows her smiling. She is always deeply serious, her great eyes very solemn. Paris, for a time, loved her for that very seriousness.

Marriage only deepened the actress's melancholy. She had everything she wished for, but she cared for but one thing—continued adoration, not by her husband, but by the fickle Parisian public.

In the last year of Lantelme's reign there rose steadily to favor a very beautiful, slim and charming actress—Mlle. Renouardt. Mlle. Renouardt was the reverse of Lantelme. She was always laughing. That was her philosophy—to laugh; as Lantelme's was to be serious. The boulevard began to talk of her, to be captivated by her gaiety. Paris cannot hold two favorites supreme at once in its heart.

Now Lantelme's barometer of her vogue was the sale of her photographs. She kept careful records of the numbers and of those of her lesser rivals. A few months before her death a change began to come over the picture fortune tellers of Cinquies. Splendid sadness had begun to take the place of the old whim. The Parisian favor veered to the lady who laughed at everything. Lantelme, fonder on the sales, became hysterical with fright. She felt herself a queen deposed, and with her throne she saw going everything she held worth living for. But she could not believe it. The little Renouardt who had delectated her, Lantelme went to a famous photographer soon after her fall began, a man who had sold her pictures by the thousands. While she was preparing to pose she heard gay laughter in the next room. It

was incessant, and Lantelme's black mood grew deeper and deeper.

"Who is it?" she asked.  
"Oh, that's the gay little Renouardt," replied the maid. "She's the gayest and prettiest, too! Her photographs are selling by the thousands and she has to pose every day to keep up with the demand."

"Is she really the one whose photographs are more in demand than mine?" asked Lantelme.

"Ah, well, Madame, she is but a passing whim. You are eternal," replied the tactful maid. But Lantelme knew better. She knew that she had been deposed. She remembered that her husband had told her that Mlle. Renouardt was attracting a great deal of attention at the Palais Royal, and when her husband admired a woman she knew that she must be worth while, for M. Edwards is a famous connoisseur of beauty.

So instead of making Lantelme gay, the laughter of Renouardt that day crystallized the sorrow in her heart. She went out into the studio, and while the photographer was arranging his camera she gave way to her morbid thoughts. The photographer turned, caught sight of her, and thinking it the most tragic pose he had ever seen, snapped her. This and the others that followed were the last she ever had taken. The journey up the Rhine came shortly after, and in a few days Lantelme had found death in the river through the open windows of her yacht.

Now it is said that Lantelme after that day in the studio could never get the laugh of Renouardt out of her ears. She got a number of pictures of the new favorite and would sit by the hour studying them. The thing became an obsession. She would see the face of Renouardt before her, the mouth slowly opening and then the laugh would ring out. To rid herself of it she threw herself from the window into the Rhine. Such is the strange story.

Now scientists say the case, far from being impossible, is in fact a variation of very common psychological phenomenon. They call it the visualization of a fixed and morbid idea. When Martin Luther thought he saw the devil and threw an inkwell at him the same thing occurred that caused Lantelme, not to throw anything at her hallucination, but to endeavor to escape it by death.

Dr. Henri Fournier, of the famous Charcot Hospital, thus explains it:

"The suggested case is not at all unusual in principle. Lantelme, we know, was a woman of intense emotionalism. This emotionalism had a pronounced trend toward the morbid. She was profoundly introspective, and held jealously her popularity. Her great fear was the loss of

this popularity. She constantly feared rivals. Here we have the perfect soil for such a delusion as this under consideration to sprout. The nerves become more and more diseased; the balance of mental forces becomes more and more unstable.

"At last comes the thing feared. What happens? In some nothing but relief; the strain is over, the worst has come, the tension is released and the mind becomes normal. But in such a temperament as Lantelme's not so. The super-sensitive mind seizes upon the dominant characteristic of the cause, in this case the rival and fastens to it like a leech. It becomes a fixed idea. The victim cannot get it out of her mind. If it is a face, she sees it always in her mind. It may be, as in the case of shocks from burglars, a hand reaching out from a hanging, a door. Always she sees the hand. With Lantelme it was a laugh.

"After a time, if there is no cure, the victim begins to visualize the cause. She thinks she actually sees it before her, or if it is a voice she hears it. It fastens more and more upon her. It becomes a hallucination. The diseased brain often works as though under the influence of hash-beech. The hallucination seems to take an inordinate time between the beginning of its fancied action and its end. So Lantelme might have imagined she saw before her the red mouth of Renouardt, slowly opening through every minute movement of laugh creation until at last the phantom lips peeled out in laughter worse than that of fiends to the hearer.

"Again and again and again this occurs. There is no rest for the sufferer but in death. Often violent madness is the result. So it might have been for Lantelme. And the tragedy is that the cause is often, as in the case of Mlle. Renouardt, entirely innocent of any intention to harm."

Even more curious is the epilogue to this story. This is that M. Edwards a month after Ginette had found rest sought Mlle. Renouardt and offered her marriage, and was sharply refused. And then he went straightway to Madame Rejane's daughter, and was accepted.

## Why Food Wins More Battles Than Bullets

By PROF. HANS MYERSON,  
Late Professor of Biology at the University of Jena.

IN very modern warfare the world hears of none of those decisive, overwhelming victories that characterized so many of the battles of the ancients, and even those of the comparatively recent Napoleonic period. This is not so much because opposing forces are nowadays more nearly equal in numbers of fighting men and fighting equipment as for the reason that they are equally well fed.

Well nourished bodies, with hunger and the dread of hunger banished, make soldiers with courage of the solid, persistent sort that is not daunted by small defeats and cannot yield to panic. Spirited martial music at the moment of going into battle lifts up the souls of soldiers, lifting them over that critical moment when death seems to confront every man, but it is the vital current of rich, red blood gained from stomachs habitually well filled that sustains those souls and bodies through hours and days of deadly, wearying conflict.

It is true that the electrifying personality of Napoleon in the earlier part of his career more than once served his ragged and half-starved battalions on to remarkable victories. But when and where has there been another military commander with such hypnotic power over the rank and file of his army? At Warsaw, when the whole army was at the verge of starvation, and was in a state of mutiny beyond the



"What's the matter with you smutty-nosed boys?"

control of generals and marshals, all that was needed was for Napoleon to gallop into the disorganized ranks, pull up his charger, strike an attitude and demand:

"What's the matter with you smutty-nosed boys?"

It will be remembered, however, that with this exception—and that ghastly retreat from Moscow—Napoleon gave his army small chance to complain about either the quantity or quality of its rations. To complete the conquest of Italy was a question of Napoleon PLUS a continuous banquet of rich food and wine and unparalleled opportunities for loot.

"Dutch courage" is a familiar designation of spirits, or rather, of the effects of spirits on the drinker; but where strong liquor whips up a momentary courage, generous, well-balanced rations bring courage of the persistent, indomitable quality.

The hungry army is the army in continuous, dejected retreat driven before the scourge of a spectre whose name is starvation.



"The scourge of a spectre whose name is starvation."

## How We Make Our Drug Slaves

By ELIZABETH SLOAN CHESSER.

THAT there is a good deal of truth in the recent declaration of a well-known medical man that "drugging has become fashionable" doctors and chemists are well aware. This is partly due to the greater strain of life to-day, to the fact that people have to spend their energies lavishly and continuously to keep in the forefront of social, business and political life. Everybody is so full of "temperament" that the sensible woman, like the plain, everyday man, is something of a rarity in our midst. And it is the people of unstable, nervous equilibrium who are most prone to take drugs. The continual tension which their temperament produces is followed by exhaustion, and once a woman discovers that a drug will provide temporary exhilaration and takes it for that reason her health is doomed. Small, occasional doses are succeeded by frequent, larger doses, and the victim to drugs goes downhill physically, morally and mentally at a very rapid pace. The prevalence of "nerves" is certainly one cause of the increase of drugging.

But there is yet another reason—and that is the facility with which drugs can be obtained by people who are beginning to know a good deal more about the uses and actions of drugs than the family physician is aware. It has always been possible to buy drugs without a prescription, without an introduction, without practically any other guarantee than the power of the purse. But so long as people were in ignorance of the action of the most dangerous drugs in the pharmacopoeia less harm could result. The last ten years has made a great difference in this respect, and the taking of drugs among men and women of all classes has enormously increased.

Even such simple non-narcotic drugs as antipyrin and phenacetin are taken indiscriminately with harmful effects. The fact of taking five grains of phenacetin to cure a violent headache does not appear, on the surface, to be very serious, but it may be the first step. The woman who knows that she can dispel her headache by an anodyne (pain killing) drug begins to use it more or less frequently, and is never without a bottle of tablets in the house. After a little time that particular drug begins to lose its effect, and she takes something else. Her headaches become neuralgic or acute in character, partly from the effect of drugging on the system. Somebody suggests a small dose of morphine as a panacea for all pain, and woe betide that woman if she follows out the suggestion. I have known women who have developed morphomania as a result of a long-

standing neuralgia which they could have cured by going to a doctor and having their eyes corrected for an error of refraction. I have known a girl to spend the whole of her allowance on drugs and get her clothes and other necessities on credit.

It may be years before the woman who drugs is found out. Drug maniacs are cunning and efficient liars, able to deceive husband, parent or sister to a remarkable extent, until they degenerate to the point of not caring. Fortunately such cases are not very common from the point of view of numbers, but many people spoil their health, their mental condition and their happiness by drugging to a less extent, just as a person may drink a good deal of alcohol with harmful results without being a dipsomaniac. The effects upon health of drugging without a doctor's advice are in many cases disastrous, but the drug habit may start by a doctor giving a prescription containing a narcotic or anodyne drug which he wishes to be taken perhaps once or for a short time. As most chemists will acknowledge, such a prescription may be used for months or years afterward without a doctor's further permission.

If every woman would make up her mind that she would take no drugs without the recent, definite order of her physician, it would provide a safeguard such as would make further legislation on the subject unnecessary. The unfortunate thing is that so many people believe that only the weak-willed and temperamentally feeble run a risk by taking drugs. This is quite erroneous. Any one of us, under certain conditions, would become morphomaniacs, or victims to cocaine, and the only safeguard is never to begin self-drugging at all. There is always a cause for neuralgia, headache, sleeplessness and every other ill of the flesh. The wise course is to find out what that cause may be, and remove it. A large whiskey may be a "cure" for a fit of blues or a disappointed love affair, but most men would recognize the folly of resorting to it in temporary depression. In the same way, it is better for a woman to sleep badly under natural conditions than gain a drugged sleep of eight or ten hours. In 99 cases out of 100, the one-hundredth should be in the charge of an efficient physician. The woman who has got into the habit of taking drugs, even in a mild way, should stop them at once. If fresh air, careful dieting, rest and outdoor exercise will not cure whatever may be defective in her health after a fair trial, she should go to a reliable doctor, confess absolutely and entirely about the drugs she has been taking and ask for his assistance to put her right.



The last picture of Lantelme. This remarkable photograph was not posed. It was taken unknown to the actress while she was weeping over Mlle. Renouardt's laughter in an adjoining room of the studio.